

INFANTS ^K

Church-Membership ¹⁰

theology vol 57. AND

BAPTISM,

Most Clearly and Fully Proved

TO BE

GOD'S OWN ORDINANCE;

From Plain Testimony of *Holy Scripture, &c.*

AND ALSO

That the Mode of Baptizing, by DIPPING
or PLUNGING the whole Body under
Water, is a Gross Error and Innovation,
it having no Foundation in the Word of
GOD.

In a Debate manag'd by Writing, betwixt
Two Friends, viz.

One of each Side the Question, at a Certain
Coffee-House in LONDON.

To the Law and to the Testimony, if they speak
not according to this WORD, it is because
there is no Light in them. Isa. viii. 20.

LONDON, Printed for the Author,
Maccrath. Price 6d.

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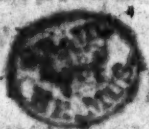
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MDCCLXXII. Price 6d.

*The AUTHOR'S Apology for his
engaging in this most unplea-
sant Work.*



It will be very necessary to give the Reader an Account why I at first wrote, and also why I now Print the following Discourse.

THE Occasion of Writing it at first, was this, *viz.* I have for these many Years belonged to a *Friendly Society*, who used to meet at a certain Coffee-House in *London*, every *Monday* in the Evening, to confer together. Now the greater Number of our Friends belonging to this Society, were of the *Anabaptist* Perswasion, who would be frequently entertaining us with Discourses on the Subject of *Infants Baptism*; inveighing against the Ordinance, and also the Manner of its Administration, and that sometimes in a very unguarded Manner, arraigning and condemning several worthy Orthodox Ministers for practising of it, to our great Grief and Offence.

YET notwithstanding those of us who held *Infant Baptism*, shew'd so much Moderation and Christian Forbearance, as never once to oppose or contradict them for many Years together, untill (encourag'd by our long Silence) they grew more bold and impertinently troublesome, insomuch

that one of them challenged to dispute the Point with any Man in the Room, and particularly with me by Name.

YET every one of us for the sake of Peace refused it, and continued in most courteous and friendly Manner to bear with them, untill we were quite weary of it; and some of our Friends had peaceably left us on that very Account.

BUT they seeing themselves to be still so successful as never to meet with any Opposition, some of them at last grew so bold as confidently to affirm, That whosoever held *Infants Baptism*, they must hold it against their Conscience; which Words occasioned an angry Debate betwixt two of our Friends, viz. One of each Side of the Question.

I then seeing their Conduct still tending to greater Disorder, and that there was never like to be any Peace unless they were silenced, as the Apostle Paul directs in a like Case, Titus i. 10, 11. *For there are many unruly and vain Talkers, &c. especially they of the Circumcision*, (and so it may well be said of many of the Opposers of *Infants Baptism*) whose Mouths must be stopped, for they subvert whole houses, &c.

I verily thought with my self that here was a loud Call of Providence, to undertake the Defence of the Truth and Ordinances of God, and it went against my Conscience to decline it any longer.

AND therefore I proposed to our Friend, who had formerly challenged me to dispute, That in order to put an End to this Controversie, I would write my Judgment concerning *Infants Church-Membership* and *Baptism*, and I would support my Opinion by Scripture or otherwise, in the best Manner I could; and that he should write his Judgment against it, and he should support his Opinion by Scripture or otherwise in the best Manner he could, and both our Writings should be brought and read before our Friends, that they might all see

who

who had the most of Truth and Strength of Argument on their Side, and that should end the Controversie betwixt us.

BUT this Proposal, tho' most just and equal on both Sides, yet it was refused at first, and I again challenged to dispute it; but the Vanity, Noise and Nonsense usually attending such Disputations, as also the Misrepresentations it would be subject to afterwards, I was too well aware of to be engaged in such vain and fruitless Controversies, and therefore I still insisted on my own Proposal as so just and equal, as well as much more useful, that it would be very unreasonable to refuse it; and therefore after much Debate, it was at last complied with, and the Time set to be that Day Month.

THUS far is the Account, why I at first wrote the following Discourse.

AND the Reasons why I now think fit to Print it, are

1st. **FOR** the Help and Confirmation of such, as either are not yet thoroughly established in the present Truth, or have not in a readiness to answer the Cavils and Objections that are frequently made use of to seduce them from it. For though many of our Divines, both ancient and modern, have written far more excellently upon this Subject than I pretend to have done; yet they have all written either so largely or so learnedly, or both, that it hath afforded but very little help to those who really needed it most; to such this brief, plain, familiar Discourse, may be much more usefull.

2^{dly}. **FOR** the Sake of the more moderate of our Brethren of the *Anabaptist* Perswasion, that they may see upon how weak Grounds so much Noise and Clamour is raised against these Priviledges of the Infant Seed of Believers, and that a Man may be very zealously affected in a wrong Cause, Gal. iv. 17. But,

3^{dly}.

July. **A**ND chiefly, for the Use of my own Children, that I may thereby, as much as in me lieth, fortify them against every where prevailing Error, and against Temptations to renounce their Baptism, and to turn their Backs upon, yea, to slight and despise an able, godly Orthodox Ministry, and give heed to seducing Fables, as Multitudes of giddy unwary Professors have done and daily do; who are like Children tossed to and fro, and carried about with every Wind of Doctrine, &c. *Ephes. iv. 14.* and are as easily imposed upon and misled, as Children by every Pretender to Truth.

FOR the pernicious Errors of crying up *Believers Baptism*, as if that only was of Divine Institution, and vehemently denying and condemning Infants Right to *Church-Membership* and *Baptism*, as an human Invention, and thereby casting them all out of the visible Church and Kingdom of God, and consequently into the visible Kingdom of the Devil, for I know of no middle State, no not even in this World; and also the doting on that unscriptural Practice of Baptizing by Dipping or Plunging the whole Body under Water, which though without any one Precept or President for it in the Word of God.

YET both these Errors have been propagated with so much Art and Industry, that they have produced a very plentiful Harvest, whilst not only Multitudes of the more ignorant and unwary Professors, but many serious Christians also, have been caught in the Snare to their great Prejudice and Dishonour.

FOR they no sooner embrace these Errors, but a whole Train of evil Consequences immediately follows upon it, viz. Such as Renouncing their former *Baptism*, and being re-baptized their Way; and then they learn not only to turn their Backs upon, but also to slight and despise an able godly Orthodox

dox Ministry, and upon every Occasion to speak very slightly and disrespectfully of them; this I know to be the common Practice of some, I having heard it with Grief and Resentment many a Time.

BUT let such know, that God will not suffer their Impiety to go unpunished, *Were ye not afraid to speak against my Servant Moses,* said God to *Aaron and Miriam,* Numb. xii. 8. And our Saviour saith of his Ministers, *Luke x. 16. He that heareth you, heareth me, and he that despiseth you, despiseth me, and he that despiseth me, despiseth him that sent me.* God takes all the Sights and Affronts put upon any of his faithful Ministers, as done to himself.

AND then they soon come to believe that our Ministers are not lawfull Ministers; because (as they say) they were never baptized; neither are their Congregations lawfull Churches, because none of them were ever baptized; and thus they learn to unchurch and unchristian all the World but themselves.

But if any of them think fit to deny this, it were easy to prove it to a Demonstration, for,

1st. THEY call themselves *The Baptized People*, which doth manifestly imply, that they account or acknowledge none to be so but themselves.

2^{dly}. LET the most holy and orthodox Christian upon Earth, offer himself to join in Communion with any of their Churches, they will not receive him, unless he will first renounce his former Baptism and Ministry which he sat under, tho' never so able and orthodox, and be Re-baptized their Way; thus they condemn as null and void the Baptism of all the Reformed Churches in the World.

AND were this fatal Doctrine but as universally believed, as they industriously endeavour to propagate it, it were easy to foresee what would soon become of the Interest of Christ and his Gospel in the World.

BUT

BUT I would earnestly exhort and charge you, my dear Children, in the Apostle's Words, *Rom. xvi. 17, 18. To mark them which cause Divisions and Offences, contrary to the Doctrine which ye have learned, and avoid them, &c.* And let no artful Pretence whatsoever, tempt you to slight or despise, and much less to turn your Backs upon any able faithful Minister of the Gospel, but always, according to the same Apostle's Exhortation, *1 Thes. v. 13. Esteem them very highly in Love for their Works sake.* And see that you ever highly prize and value every precious Gospel Mercy and Privilege which God hath graciously bestowed on you and yours, and particularly that of your *Infants Church-Membership*; for it is a very great Mercy and Privilege to be a Member, (yea, though at present, you are no more but a visible Member) of Christ's Church and Kingdom on Earth; for you are in a much fairer and more likely Way for Conversion and Salvation in the Church than you could be out of it.

FOR it is a most certain Truth, that there are more Persons truly converted and brought Home to Christ, by the preaching of the Gospel in *London*, in one Year, than in *Rome* or *Constantinople*, where there are no such Gospel Mercies and Privileges to be enjoy'd, in Five Hundred Years; and then it is a great Mercy to be born in *London*, where the Gospel is preached, and God is owned and worshipped, for such are eminently in the Way of promised Mercy, *Exod. xx. 24. In all Places where I record my Name, I will come unto thee, and I will bless thee.*

MOREOVER, the Children of godly Parents as such, are born to a valuable Inheritance, of exceeding great and precious Promises and Privileges, even such as the rest of the World are Strangers to. *Rom. ix. 4. Who are Israelites, to whom pertaineth the Adoption, and the Glory, and the Covenants, and the giving of the Law, and the Service of God, and the Promises, &c.*

THESE

T H E S E choice Privileges were peculiar to the *Israelites* and their Seed, before the coming of Christ; and at that Time the *Gentiles* and their Seed, were without Christ, being Aliens from the Common Wealth of *Israel*, and Strangers from the Covenants of Promise, having no Hope, and without God in the World, *Ephes. ii. 12.*

B U T now Christ hath broken down the middle Wall of Partition between us, *Vers. 14.* Now Believing *Gentiles* and their Seed, are fully invested with all the same precious Promises and Privileges, that the *Israelites* were, *Ephes. ii. 19.* Now therefore ye are no more Strangers and Foreigners, but fellow Citizens with the Saints and of the Household of God. Yea, Believing *Gentiles* are said, *Ephes. iii. 6.* To be fellow Heirs and of the same Body with the Jews. Believing *Gentiles* and their Seed, are now grafted into the same Olive Tree, of which the Jews and their Seed were the natural Branches, but are now broken off for unbelief, as is more fully made to appear in the following Discourse.

B U T here some may object and say, What Profit is there in these external Privileges, if they are not saving to all those that do enjoy them?

S U C H I shall answer in the Apostle's Words, who asketh the same Question, and answereth it himself. *Rom. iii. 1, 2.* What Advantage then hath the Jew, and what Profit is there of Circumcision? He answereth, *vers. 2.* Much every way, chiefly because that unto them are committed the Oracles of God, &c.

M U C H every Way; It is every Way advantageous to them, but chiefly, because that unto them are committed the Oracles of God; the Word of God and the Ordinances of the Gospel are committed unto them; they have the Means of Grace to enjoy, which others have not, and are in a fair probability of Salvation: And tho' they are not all saved, yet the golden Vein of Election runs peculi-

arly amongst them; and we have no Warrant from the Word of God to believe, that any are saved out of the Church; and it must naturally yield very great Comfort to any Believer to consider, that even his dear Children also are planted in God's Vineyard, and so are under the peculiar Care of his Providence: *Isa. xxvii. 2, 3. In that day sing ye unto her, a Vineyard of red Wine, I the Lord do keep it; I will water it every moment, lest any hurt it; I will keep it Night and Day.*

THIS Vineyard of the Lord of Hosts was then the House of Israel, and the Men of Judah his pleasant Plant, *Isa. v. 7.* These precious Privileges are peculiar to the Church of God, wheresoever it is planted; and such kind Promises were never made to any out of it. Do you stedfastly believe and hold fast these Truths, and let no Man dispute or reason you out of them.

FOR your sakes chiefly do I print the following Discourse; for what hath been my Case, and is daily the Case of many thousands of more excellent Christians, may very likely be yours, viz. To be frequently and strongly assaulted with Temptations to part with those precious Truths, and to receive gross Errors, and blind Delusions instead of them; I would therefore, as much as in me lieth, endeavour to fortify you against them.

BE not over credulous, believe not every Pretender to Truth. *The Simple believeth every Word, but the Prudent Man looketh well to his goings. Prov. xiv. 15.* The Noble Bereans are greatly commended, *Acts xvii. 11.* because they would not receive any Doctrine upon Trust, no not from an Apostle, but searched the Scriptures daily, to see whether it was true or not: Do you always use the same commendable Care and Diligence.

THEREFORE let me again charge you, to beware of them who cause Divisions and Offences,
contra-

contrary to the Doctrine which you have learned,
and avoid them.

B E W A R E of such Persons whose Religion seems wholly to lie in clamouring and railing against Infants Right to *Church-Membership* and *Baptism*, which are God's own Ordinance; and in disputing and contending more for the Mode of Baptizing by Dipping or Plunging the whole Body under Water, than for all the great and necessary Articles of the Christian Religion, which though it is but an human Invention, and hath not one Precept nor Precedent for it in the Word of God, yet both these Errors many dote upon, and are even labouring to gain Profelites unto, with so great Zeal and Diligence, as if the whole of Christianity did consist in a conformity thereunto. And therefore they are ever doting about Questions and Strifes of Words, concerning these things whereof cometh Envy, Strifes, Railings, Evil Surmisings, Perverse Disputings, &c. 1 Tim. vi. 4, 5. What violent Opposition they have made in these last Ages, against our greatest Reformers, both in *England* and in foreign Countreys, is too well known to all who are but a little conversant in History.

B U T particularly here in *England*, ever since the Reformation, they have been continually opposing not only private Christians, but also the most able, godly orthodox Ministers, and hindering them in their Work. What continual vain Boastings, what Writings, what Challenges, what Disputings, yea how many Triumphs for Victory, have they made in all Parts of the Kingdom?

W H E N the Assembly of Divines, and Commissioners of the Church of *Scotland*, sat at *Westminster*, in 1643. Their great Champion Dr. *Tancks*, sent to Dr. *Tuckney*, Chairman of the Committee, no less than a whole Dozen of impertinent, perverse Arguments against *Infants Baptism* for them to an-

swer, (the which Arguments I have by me). And but few Ministers, or private Christians either, have been so happy as wholly to escape their Assaults; so restless and unwearied are they in their endeavours to propagate their Errors, and still they presume that no Man is able to stand before them.

AND indeed to the Shame and Dishonour of most of our lazy indolent Professors be it spoken, but very few of them are able to deal with them; and much less are they able to defend any of the great and important Articles of the Christian Religion, if they happen to be set upon by a cunning Adversary.

BUT let me tell such, that if they spent less Time in their needless Diversions and Recreations, to say no worse, and diligently improved that Time in Prayer and the Study of God's Word, and other suitable Helps, they would certainly be much better Proficients in the School of Christ, and be better able to defend those precious Truths, which they do now (but little more than) profess to believe. But what a Shame and Dishonour is it even to any private Christian, That he should not be able to say exceeding much more, and more to the Purpose, for any of the precious Truths and Ordinances, and Ministers of the Gospel too, than any Adversary can be able to say against them.

THIS I own to be a Digression; but it hath grieved me many a Time, to see and hear the gross Ignorance and Stupidity of the generallity of Professors, and that not only of the meaner Sort, but Men of Figure and Character in the Church; how easily such have been quite nonplust and silenced, by any trifling Objections, or weak and foolish Arguments, made use of against them by an Adversary though of but common and mean Parts.

AND it is this that gives them such great Advantage

wantage against the Truth and the Professors of it, and makes them so bold in their Assaults, and so often to triumph for Victory, though gained over only childish Folly and Weakness.

I will conclude this Apology with a Word or two to our Brethren of the *Anabaptist* Perswasion, who may think that I have dealt somewhat censoriously or uncharitably with them. But if they will seriously and impartially consider the Case in all its Circumstances from first to last, they cannot but see great cause to think otherwise. For,

1st. I have wholly concealed every Man's Name concerned in this Affair, and the Place where it was transacted, that no Man might be reflected on about it.

2^{dly}. W E were not the Aggressors, but exercised long Patience and Christian Forbearance towards them, and bore their Affronts and Insults many Years, when we were well assured, that if either of us had ever presumed to have made, if but one single Reflection, upon any of their Ministers, or Opinions, or Way of Baptizing, they would not have forborn us so many Minutes; but according to their wonted Bravery, they would have immediately challenged the Field of us to dispute it out by dint of Argument.

3^{dly}. W H A T I have written at last, was even extorted from me; for I was forced to do it, or else I must have basely and cowardly betrayed and given up the Cause and Truth of God, without once endeavouring the just and necessary Defence of it, which I durst not in Conscience do any longer.

4^{thly}. I declare, that notwithstanding any seeming uncharitableness, I have dealt most favourably and tenderly with them, without making any Reflections on any of their Ministers, or on any of their other Errors or Mistakes which they held formerly, or do hold at present, all which I am familiarly

familiarly acquainted with, and was well able to have improved against them; but I confined my self to the present Controversie, for the sake of Peace, and the Love I bear to many of them, whom I esteem as Persons truly fearing God, notwithstanding the Errors which they have unhappily fallen into.

5^{thly}. Have I here inveighed against their Errors and Mistakes, and the violent Opposition which they make against the Ministers of Christ, and the Ordinances and Privileges of the Gospel; and warned and charged my Children to beware of these Snares, and endeavoured to fortify them against the Danger thereof? And can they blame me for so doing, when they themselves have been the Aggressors? And have not I as good a right for once, to endeavour to defend the Ordinances and Privileges, and Ministers of the Gospel too, as they have frequently to rail and clamour against them, and to endeavour to deliver my Children and Friends too, if I can, out of these Snares, as they have to endeavour to entangle them therein, and should I not be guilty of great unfaithfulness to them wholly to neglect it, when they themselves have made it necessary for us to be thus upon our Guard.

6^{thly}. IT is the Cause of God and his Truth that I am engaged in the Defence of, and should I cowardly betray it, or lazily defend it for fear of displeasing any Man, or any Body of Men in the World, I should greatly offend God and wrong my own Soul.

7^{thly}. And lastly, I will conclude, with seriously recommending to them these two things, viz.

1st. THAT they would spend more of their Time and Zeal in preaching up, and disputing for, the absolute Necessity of Regeneration, of Repentance and Faith in Christ; and less in bitter Invectives against *Infants Baptism*, and those who practice it.

zdy. **T H A T** they would zealously and diligently endeavour to convert the Ignorant and Profane, and not labour only to gather Profelitts out of other Churches.

T H U S would they act more wisely in the First, more fairly in the Second, and more becoming Christians in both.

I come now to what was written by me in Defence of Infants Church-Membership and Baptism, &c. And Read before our Society.

B U T because I did expect that there would be several Strangers present at the Reading of it; I thought it would be greatly necessary, rightly to inform them of the Occasion and Design of it before I began; and also truly to state the Controversie depending betwixt us, which I did in a very short Preface, and is as follows.

B E F O R E I begin to read the following Paper, it will be necessary to acquaint our Friends with the Occasion and Design of it, especially if there be any here who are not well acquainted with it already; which is as followeth,

W E of this Friendly Society, who have conversed together in this Manner (at least some of us) near this Seven Years, in great Respect and Friendship; yet differ in our Judgments in Point of *Infants Church-Membership and Baptism, &c.* And though those of us who hold Infants Baptism, did never once in all this time mention, and much less seek by any means to impose our Opinions upon them, nor did we ever so much as once return an Answer to any Arguments or Objections made use of by them in favour of their Opinions against us.

Y E T our Brethren of the *Anabaptist* Perswasion, far from the like Moderation and Christian Forbearance, have very often, and of late customarily been

been urging their Opinions upon us as necessary for us to Believe and Practice, even far beyond the Weight and Importance of the Subject; and that sometimes accompanied with Censures and Reflections on our Ministers, and the Ordinance it self, as practised by us, even in a very unguarded manner; on account of which, some of our Friends have been offended, and others have withdrawn from us, to the great hindrance of our more profitable Conversation together.

NOW it will be very natural to conclude from the foregoing Account, that our Brethren of the *Anabaptist* Perswasion, would be very ready to conclude from our long Silence, that they were wholly in the right, and that we had (as they suggested) no Foundation in the Word of God for our Judgment and Practice.

And on the other hand, some of our Friends might very likely be stumbled, as well as offended, by their frequent Assaults made upon us.

NOW the end and design in writing this Discourse was to prevent, as much as I could, both these Evils.

AND I would also, before I begin, remove all occasion of Misunderstanding in Point of the Controversie depending betwixt us; and therefore whilst I am pleading for, or endeavouring to prove, that all the Children of Believing Parents are, by God's own merciful Gift and Ordinance, Members of his visible Church and Kingdom, and as such, ought to be admitted into it by Baptism.

OBSERVE here that I would not be understood, that I am pleading for, or that I believe the certain Election and Salvation of all the Children of godly Parents.

NO, far from that, for I believe with the Apostle, *Rom. ix. 6, 7. That they are not all Israel, who are of Israel. Neither because they are the Seed of*

Abraham,

Abraham, are they all Children of the Promise. That which I believe, and shall endeavour to prove, is their *Visible Church-Membership*. viz. That as all *Abraham's* natural Seed, then *Ishmael* as well as *Isaac*, and *Esau* as well as *Jacob*, were externally in Covenant and circumcised; even so all the Children of Believers, now under the Gospel, are visible Church Members, and as such ought to be Baptized.

This is what our Brethren of the *Anabaptist* Perswasion deny to all Infants; and this is what I shall endeavour to prove, doth belong to all the Infants of Believers as such, by God's own Appointment, even now under the Gospel. I now proceed.

WE are commanded, 1 *Pet.* iii. 15. To be ready always to give an Answer to every Man that asketh us, a reason of the Hope that is in us, with Meekness and Fear.

NOW I having been questioned several Times, as to my Judgment concerning *Infants Church-Membership* and *Baptism*, I do in Obedience to this Command, and for divers other weighty Reasons, very willingly submit thus to discharge my Duty, and proceed as followeth.

I do most stedfastly Believe and Affirm, That all the Children of Believing Parents are, by the merciful Gift and Ordinance of God, Members of his Visible Church and Kingdom, and that as such they have a Right to be baptized, and therefore ought to be solemnly admitted into the Church by Baptism, even in their Infant State.

THAT they were Members of the visible Church and Kingdom of God, by his own merciful Gift and Ordinance, in old Testament Times, and constantly admitted into it by Circumcision, (the then initiating Sign or Seal of the Covenant) is evident from clear and abundant Testimony of Holy

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Scripture;

Scripture; *Gen. xvii. 9, 10, 11, 12. And God said unto Abraham, thou shalt keep my Covenant, therefore thou and thy Seed after thee in their Generations, vers. 10. This is my Covenant which ye shall keep between me and you, and thy Seed after thee, every Man Child among you shall be circumcised. vers. 11. And ye shall circumcise the Flesh of your Foreskin, vers. 12. And it shall be a Token of the Covenant between me and you. vers. 13. And my Covenant shall be in your Flesh for an everlasting Covenant.*

T H U S it doth evidently appear, that all the Children of believing *Abraham*, were by the merciful Gift and Ordinance of God taken into Covenant with himself, and made Members of his visible Church and Kingdom, together with *Abraham*, and had the Seal (Circumcision) applied to them even in their Infant State.

A N D also that this Privilege was not peculiar to *Abraham*, and to his immediate Seed only, but it was to be continued to his Posterity throughout their Generations for an everlasting Covenant.

A N D that this merciful Gift and Ordinance of God, of Infants Church-Membership and Circumcision was continued in the Jewish Church, even untill the coming of Christ, is so plainly and fully confirmed throughout the old Testament, that I trust no Man will pretend to deny it.

2^{dly}. It doth further appear, that all the Children of Believing Parents in the Jewish Church, were not only Members of the visible Church and Kingdom of God, but also that as such, they were always together with their Parents, solemnly engaged in all Covenant Transactions with God; as you may see, *Deut. xxix. 10, 11, 12, 13. Ye stand this Day all of you before the Lord, your little Ones, your Wives, &c. That thou shouldest enter into a Covenant with the Lord thy God, and into his Oath which the Lord thy God maketh with thee this day. That he may establish*

establish thee to Day for a People unto himself, and that he may be unto thee a God, as he hath said unto thee, and as he hath sworn unto thy Fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and unto Jacob.

WHERE observe, That God took all these Little Ones in as full and as ample a Manner into his Covenant and into his Oath as he did their Parents, thus solemnly to establish them both together, for to be a People unto himself, and that he might be unto them a God, according to his faithful Promise and his Oath. *vers. 13. As he hath said unto thee, and as he hath sworn unto thy Fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac and unto Jacob.* Thus it is very evident.

1st. THAT this was truly a continuation and establishment of that same Covenant which God made with Abraham and his Seed in *Gen. xvii. As he hath sworn unto thy Fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac and unto Jacob.*

2^{dly}. THAT all these Little Ones were as truly, as fully and as compleatly taken into Covenant with God, and made Members of his visible Church and Kingdom, as their Parents.

3^{dly}. I might further shew, That God did always account of them as his own Servants and Children, in a special and peculiar Manner, *Levit. xxv. 41, 42. And then shall he depart from thee, both he and his Children with him, for they are my Servants which I brought forth out of the Land of Egypt.* And *Ezek. xvi. 20, 21. Moreover thou hast taken thy Sons and thy Daughters which thou hast born unto me, and these hast thou sacrificed unto them to be devoured; Is this of thy Whoredoms a small matter, that thou hast slain my Children?*

4^{thly}. IT is also worthy our serious Observation That as God doth, through the Riches of his distinguishing Grace and Mercy, always bestow on the Seed of the godly, all the same external Covenant Mercies and Privileges that he doth on themselves,

selves, and that because they are such ; as it is said, *Deut. iv. 37. And because he loved the Fathers, therefore he chose their Seed after them.* So he generally inflicts on the Seed of the ungodly, the same dreadful desolating Judgments that he doth on themselves, and that because they are such. So he dealt with the old World, when at the same Time he saved *Noah*, and his Sons for his sake, though one of them was ungodly ; and so he dealt with *Sodom* and *Gomorrab*, when at the same time he saved *Lot*, and his Children for his sake ; so he dealt with all the first Born in *Egypt* ; and so he dealt with the *Canaanites*, concerning whom the *Israelites*, were commanded not to leave alive any that breathed. *Deut. xx. 16.* So that let obstinate Men say what they will, you see here, that God always makes a distinguishing Difference betwixt the Seed of the godly, and the Seed of the wicked, and hath solemnly declared, *Psalms xxxvii. 25, 26. That the Seed of the Righteous is blessed ;* and threatned, *vers. 28. That the Seed of the wicked shall be cut off.*

THUS I have most clearly and fully proved,

1st. THAT all the Children of Believing Parents were, by the merciful Gift and Ordinance of God, taken into his visible Church and Kingdom, together with themselves, in old Testament Times ; were visibly in Covenant with God, and that they had these blessed Privileges sealed to them by Circumcision, the then Seal of the Covenant ; and that these Privileges were continued to Infants, in the *Jewish Church* untill the coming of *Christ*.

2^{dly}. THAT they were always together with their Parents solemnly engaged in all Covenant Transactions with God.

3^{dly}. THAT God did always account of them as his own Servants and Children in a special and peculiar manner,

4^{thly}. THAT as God is thus distinguishingly good

good and gracious to all the Seed of the godly, as such; so he sheweth as great Justice and Severity towards the Seed of the ungodly, as such; notwithstanding their supposed Innocency and Incapacity.

IT remains now to enquire whether this merciful Gift and Ordinance of God, of Infants Church-Membership, be repealed or not.

I have most clearly and fully proved from plain Testimony of Holy Scripture, that they were Members of the visible Church and Kingdom of God, by his own merciful Gift and Ordinance; and constantly admitted into it by Circumcision in old Testament Times, even untill the coming of Christ; and then how came they to lose this blessed Privilege, I challenge all the Enemies and Opposers of Infants Church-Membership and Baptism in the World, to shew us out of God's Word, when or where he cast them out; for it lies on them soundly to prove the Repeal of this Ordinance before we have any Reason to believe them. Howbeit because we are not now disputing, but I proposed only briefly to lay down my own Opinion and my Reasons on which it is grounded. I proceed to declare as before.

THAT I do most stedfastly Believe and Affirm, that all the Children of Believing Parents, even now under the Gospel, are by the same merciful Gift and Ordinance of God, never yet repealed, continued in their ancient Privilege of being Members of his visible Church and Kingdom, together with their Parents; and that as such, they ought to be solemnly admitted into it by Baptism, the now initiating Sign or Seal of the Covenant.

THAT God's merciful Gift and Ordinance of Infants Church-Membership is not repealed, but is continued the same in the Christian Church, that it was in the Jewish Church, is evident from Rom. xi. 17. And if some of the Branches be broken off, &c.

From

N^o 13 and the Chapter it only alludes

From whence I argue thus, If but some of the Branches were broken off, then the rest that were not broken off, must needs retain their ancient Standing in the Church, both Parents and Children.

2dly. FROM Rom. xi. 20. *Well because of Unbelief they were broken off, &c.* Now if none of the Jews were broken off but for Unbelief, then all the Believing Jews and their Seed, did still retain their ancient Standing in the Church.

3dly. FROM Rom. xi. 17. *And if some of the Branches be broken off, and thou being a wild Olive Tree, wert grafted in amongst them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the Olive Tree.*

OBSERVE here that the Apostle using the Similitude of an Olive Tree; by good Olive Tree, I hope you will allow that he means the visible Church, and by wild Olive Tree, the whole unbelieving World.

AND then if it was the same Church that some of the Jews were broken off from, and which the Believing Gentiles were grafted into, then these Believing Gentiles Children had the same Right to Church-Membership, and by consequence to the Seal of it too, that the Jews Children had; for if their Church always admitted Infants to be Members, and our Church be the same; then our Church must admit of Infants to be Members too.

NOW one would think that this is such a plain and convincing Proof of the Continuance of Infants Right to Church-Membership, that no Man should pretend to deny it.

4thly. BUT it is still further evident, that the Apostle thus arguing, doth here make the Olive Tree, that is the Church, to remain still the very same; only some of the Jewish Branches were broken off, and others of the Gentiles were grafted in in their stead.

5thly. FROM Rom. xi. 24. *How much more shall these*

these which be the natural Branches, be grafted into their own Olive Tree. Now if it be into their own Olive Tree, even the same Olive Tree which they were broken off from, and of which they were the natural Branches, that the Jews shall be re-ingrafted into, at their Recovery or Calling; then God's Ordinance for their Infants Church Membership is not repealed; but this is expressly affirmed in the Text; therefore it is not repealed.

AND the Apostle saith, *Ephes. iii. 6.* That the Gentiles are fellow-heirs and of the same Body (*viz.* Church) with the Jews.

6^{thly}. I will further add this plain and certain Truth of the Gospel, *viz.* That there is no Salvation for any, neither small nor great, Jew nor Gentile, but in and by the Covenant of Grace. For the Covenant which we Gentiles are saved by, is the self same Covenant which God made with Abraham and his Seed, as I have shewed before, and further prove from *Gal. iii. 29.* And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's Seed, and Heirs according to the Promise. Now that Covenant and Promise was, That God would be his God, and the God of his Seed, by an everlasting Covenant, *Gen. xvii.* The which Spiritual Seed the Believing Gentiles are, as truly as the Jews, and upon this very Account it is, that Abraham is called the Father of many Nations, in *Gen. xvii. 15.* and *Rom. iv. 16, 17, 18.* And therefore the Apostle saith, *Gal. iv. 28.* And we Brethren, as Isaac was, are the Children of Promise. From whence I infer, That the Children of Believers now, must needs be Church Members, and in Covenant as Isaac's Children was, and ought to be Baptized as his was Circumcised.

And whereas our Brethren of the Anabaptist Per-
swasion, call upon us for plain Scripture to war-
rant our Faith and Practice in this Point; I think

that

that here they have it most clearly and abundantly, if they will believe it.

AND truly so much is said in Favour of the Seed of godly Parents, and the tender Care and Love which God shews towards them in an especial and peculiar Manner, as such, not only in the Old Testament, but throughout the New Testament too, as that they Believe in Christ, *Mat. xviii. 17.* Rejoice in their Faith, *Luke i. 44.* And Praise God, *Mat. xxi. 15.* And that they are the blessed Inhabitants of the Kingdom of Heaven, *Mat. xix. 14.* *Mark x. 14.* *Luke xviii. 16.* And that they have a Life Guard of glorious Angels to attend them whilst in this World, *Mat. xviii. 10.* That it is matter of just Wonder and Amazement, how a Sect of Men professing Christianity should thus bestir themselves with such restless Zeal and Diligence to cast them all out of the visible Church and Kingdom of Christ, contrary to his expresse Will revealed in his Word.

AND here many other Texts of Scripture might be added to prove, That the Infants of Believers, now under the Gospel, have the same Right to Church-Membership, and the Seal of it too, that the Jews Infants had in Old Testament Times: But I have not room to enlarge, and I think that what I have already written is sufficient; for one plain Text of Scripture, or one sound Argument, is enough to prove any Truth, if there was never another.

HOWBEIT I will add to the foregoing, That I have the concurring Consent and Testimony to this Truth, both in Faith and Practice of all the Churches of Christ, I believe in the whole World, but in Europe I am sure, I having their Confessions of Faith by me.

THAT the Churches of England and Scotland believe so, and practice accordingly, is so well known to all that it needs no Proof.

THE

In Infants
 Joy
 13th line
 It is in one in a word
 that a Christian should so
 much Abuse of Power of

not being 13th line

THE Church of *Ausburgh* in *Germany*, in their Confession say, *Art. 9.* " We condemn the *Ana-*

" *baptists*, who allow not the Baptism of Infants, and hold that Infants are saved though they die without Baptism, and be not within the Church of God." The Church of *Helvetia*, in their

Confession say, " We condemn the *Anabaptists* who

" deny that Infants born of faithful Parents are

" to be baptized, for according to the Doctrine of

" the Gospel, theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven."

The Church of *Bohemia*, in their Confession say,

" For these Causes do our Ministers, without any

" doubt, and boldly baptize Children in the Name

" of the Holy Trinity, applying unto them a Sign

" of most effectual Vertue, and a most sure witness-

" bearing of that thing which by Christ's own

" Words is assigned to this Age, and is imparted to

" it." The *French* Church in their Confession

say, " Although Baptism be a Sacrament of Faith

" and Repentance, yet seeing that God doth to-

" gether with the Parents, account their Posterity

" also to be of the Church, we affirm, that Infants

" being born of holy Parents, are by the Authority

" of *Christ* to be baptized." The Church of *Belgia*

in their Confession say, " We detest the Errors of

" the *Anabaptists*, who condemn the Baptism of

" Infants; but we believe they ought to be bapti-

" zed, and sealed with the Seal of the Covenant;

" for the same Reason for the which the Infants

" of the *Israelites* were circumcised, that is, by

" reason of the same Promises made to our Infants

" that were made to theirs." The Confession of

Saxony saith, " We also baptize Infants, because

" it is most certain that the promise of Grace doth

" also pertain to them, and of these it is said, Suf-

" fer little Children to come unto me, because unto

" such pertaineth the Kingdom of Heaven. And of

" this matter there be many things written and

“ published in our Churches, whereby the *Anabap-*
 “ *rists* are refuted. ” The Confession of *Sweden*
 saith, “ And seeing that Baptism is a Sacrament of
 “ that Covenant which God hath made with those
 “ that be his, promising that he will be their God;
 “ and the God of their Seed; therefore it ought to
 “ be given to Infants also, as well as that under
 “ *Moses* they were circumcised; for we are indeed
 “ the Children of *Abraham*, and therefore that
 “ Promise, I will be thy God and the God of thy
 “ Seed, doth no less belong to us than it did to
 “ that Ancient People. ” The Confession of *Wir-*
temberg saith, “ We acknowledge that Baptism is
 “ to be ministered as well to Infants as to those that
 “ are grown to full Age; and that it is to be used
 “ in the Church, even to the End of the World, in
 “ the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of
 “ the Holy Ghost, according to Christ’s Institution.

AND *Origen*, who lived about 213 Years after
 Christ, Writing upon *Rom. vi.* saith, “ That the
 “ Church received the Custom of baptizing Infants
 “ from the Apostles. ” And Mr. *John Philpot*,
 Martyr, whilst he was in Prison, a Friend wrote
 to him desiring his Judgment concerning Infants
 Baptism. He returned him a very long Answer,
 which you may see in *Acts and Monuments*, Vol. 3.
 Page 509. Part of which I will transcribe verbatim.

“ INDEED (saith he) if you look upon the
 “ Papistical Synagogue only, which hath corrup-
 “ ted God’s Word by false Interpretations, and
 “ hath perverted the true Sense of Christ’s Sacra-
 “ ments, you might seem to have good handfast of
 “ your Opinions against the Baptism of Infants;
 “ but forasmuch as it is of more Antiquity, and
 “ hath its beginning from God’s Word, and from
 “ the Use of the Primitive Church, it must not in
 “ respect of the abuse in the Popish Church be neg-
 “ lected, or thought not expedient to be used in
 “ Christ’s

“ *Christ’s Church. Auxentius*, one of the *Arian* Sect.
 “ with his Adherents, was one of the first that
 “ denyed the Baptism of Children; and next af-
 “ ter him *Pelagius* the Heretick, and some other
 “ there were in *St. Bernards* Time, it doth appear
 “ by his Writings; and in our Days the *Anabaptists*,
 “ and inordinate kind of Men, stirred up by the
 “ Devil, to the Destruction of the Gospel; but
 “ the Catholick Truth delivered to us by the Scrip-
 “ tures, plainly determineth that all such are to
 “ be baptized, &c. ” And again in Page 510.
 “ The Apostles in Times past being yet not suffici-
 “ ently instructed, did murmur against those which
 “ brought their Children unto the Lord; but the
 “ Lord rebuked them and said, *Let the Babes come*
 “ *unto me*: Why then do not these rebellious *Ana-*
 “ *baptists* obey the Commandment of the Lord, &c.

THUS you see they stand condemned by all
 the Reformed Churches, which one would think
 should be a means to restrain them from their usual
 bold and vain-glorious way of asserting and main-
 taining their own private Opinions.

AND one would also think that the concurring
 Consent and Testimony in Faith and Practice of all
 the Churches of Christ, should be of very great
 weight with every unbiafed serious Christian, to
 determine his Judgment in this Controversie; the
 Apostle *Paul* thought so, and used the same Argu-
 ment (in another Case) 1 Cor. xi. 16. *Howbeit if*
any Man seemeth contentious, we have no such Custom,
neither the Churches of Christ.

AND thus I have thought very briefly, yet I
 trust most clearly and fully proved,

1st. THAT all the Infants of Believing Pa-
 rents were, by the merciful Gift and Ordinance of
 God, taken into his visible Church and Kingdom,
 together with their Parents, in old Testament
 Times, were visibly in Covenant with God, and

that this blessed Privilege was always sealed to them by Circumcision, the then Seal of the Covenant, and that this Privilege was continued to Infants in the *Jewish Church* untill the coming of *Christ*.

2 dly. **T H A T** this merciful Gift and Ordinance of God, of Infants Church-Membership, &c. was never repealed, but continues the very same now under the Gospel, that it was before the coming of *Christ*. And that,

1 st. **F R O M** plain and manifold Testimony of Holy Scripture, both of the Old and New Testament.

2 dly. **F R O M** the concurring Consent and Testimony, both in Faith and Practice, of all the Churches of *Christ*; an ancient Father of the Primitive Church, and a faithful Martyr of *Jesus Christ*, who all with great Zeal, and with one Consent, bear witness to this Truth.

A N D surely all this doth amount to such a clear and substantial Proof of what I am pleading for, that one would think no Man in the World should ever pretend to deny it.

B U T I observe by the way, That notwithstanding our Brethren of the *Anabaptist* Perswasion, shew such an unbounded Zeal against Infants *Baptism*; under the notion of strictly adhering to the Rule of the Gospel, yet they themselves generally walk contrary to it in their own Practice; for according to the Rule of the Gospel every one ought to be *Baptized* immediatly upon their Believing in *Christ*, so was the Three Thousand converted by *Peter*, *Acts*, ii. 4. So was the *Euneuch*, *Acts* viii. 36. So was the Apostle *Paul*, *Acts* ix. 17. Yea, he was greatly hastned to it by *Ananias*, *Acts* xxii. 16. And now why tarriest thou, arise and be baptized, &c. And so was *Cornelius* and all his Company, *Acts* x. 47. So was *Lydia* and all Household, *Acts* xvi. 15.

And

And so was the Jaylor and all his, even the same Hour of the Night, *Acts* xvi. 33. And we have not one Instance in all the New Testament, of any one that delayed it for any Cause whatsoever, no not for an Hour.

BUT they generally delay it many Months, yea Years, after they profess to believe in Christ, and very many of them are never baptized at all; who yet have Courage enough to be perpetually encountering of us with bitter Invectives against Infants Baptism, as an unscriptural Practice; yea, so far are they transported with an intemperate Zeal in this Point, joined with a great Assurance of an easy and compleat Victory, that they make this their *Herculean Club*, wherewith they presume, that they are able to knock down every one that durst be so hardy as to oppose them; just like as the Papists do by their Idol Doctrine of Transubstantiation, which they also presume, with the like Assurance, is unanswerable: For, *What saist thou (say they) to the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar, doth not the Scripture say, Hoc est Corpus, This is my Body?* And how will the poor Heretick be able to confute them, who have such plain Scripture on their Side to support them.

AND so say our Brethren the *Anabaptists*, *Doth not the Scripture say, Believe and be Baptized? But Infants cannot Believe, and therefore they ought not to be Baptized.*

THUS the Argument and the Conclusion runs Paralel on both Sides, and both Parties manage it with a like Zeal and Assurance. *Joined them together*

I come now to Answer some of the most usual Objections raised against our Practice of Baptizing Infants. As,

1st. INFANTS are not capable of answering the Ends of Baptism, for it is an engaging Sign, and signifies the washing away of Sin in the Blood of Christ.

I ANSWER, So was Circumcision as much an engaging Sign as Baptism, and signified the cutting off the Body of the Sins of the Flesh; and our Infants are as capable of the one, as the *Jews* Infants was of the other.

2^d Obj. HOW can an Infant covenant with God, or be engag'd by this Sign (*Baptism*) imposed on him without his Consent.

I ANSWER, 1st. GOD chose the *Israelites* and their Little Ones, both together; as hath been proved before from *Deut. xxix. 13.* and entered into a Covenant, and into an Oath with them, that he might establish them both together to be a People to himself, and that he might be unto them a God. And then the Want of a Capacity or Consent in their Little Ones, was no Bar to their Church-Membership and Circumcision; and sure our Little Ones are full as capable of the same Mercy; and then this is but a vain and trifling Objection.

2^{dly}. GOD hath given godly Parents this Right and Power over their Children, to engage them in Covenant with God; yea, and to disengage them from God too, and that not only in Infancy, but in riper Years also, as you may see *Numb. xxx. 3, 4, 5.* Where God gave the Father Power to disanul his Daughters Vow, though made to God himself.

MOREOVER, though our mistaken Brethren study Arguments to dispute their Children out of the Church and Kingdom of God; yet they are as careful as others to get them a Share in the Kingdom of this World, and never question their own Right, nor their Childrens Capacity or Consent either, when they bind or engage them to perform Conditions stipulated in Deeds, Bonds, or Leases, even in their Infant State, or before they are born either, if they think they can get any thing by it.

BUT is not this a very strange Delusion, to think that they have no Right to engage their Children

dren in Covenant with God for their good, for want of a Capacity and Consent, though he commands it, and challengeth them for his own Covenant People, together with their Parents, as hath been fully proved before ; and yet at the same time to think that they have a just right to engage them in Covenant with Men, without any such Capacity or Consent, though many times to their Prejudice or undoing.

BUT to such we may well say, as the Apostle Paul to the *Galatians*, in another Case, Chap. v. 8. *This Persuasion cometh not of him that calleth you.*

3^d Obj. **ACCORDING** to the Gospel Rule, Teaching and Believing ought to go before Baptizing ; but Infants are not capable of being taught, nor of making an actual Confession of their Faith.

Answ. SO did Teaching and Believing always go before Circumcision in the Adult ; as you may see it did in *Abraham*, Rom. iv. ~~11~~ ¹² *And he received the Sign of Circumcision, a Seal of the Righteousness of the Faith which he had yet, being uncircumcised.* Thus you see that Believing went before Circumcising then, as well as now before Baptizing in grown Persons ; for Circumcision was then the same that Baptism is now, (*viz.*) A Seal of the Righteousness of Faith. And I have before fully proved, That God did always receive the Children of Believers into his visible Church and Kingdom, together with themselves ; and hath declar'd, Deut. iv. 37. *That because he loved the Fathers, therefore he chose their Seed after them.* And Psalm xxxvii. 25, 26. *That the Seed of the Righteous is blessed.* You see that God speaks very plain, but when Men are wedded to their own Opinions they will not regard him.

4th Obj. **I F** Infants are Church-Members, and ought to be baptized, Why may they not also receive the Lord's Supper ?

Answ. **I F** is unmannerly and unsafe to presume

to require of Christ a Reason of his Institutions. And I have before proved that they ought to be baptized; let them prove if they can, that they ought to receive the Lord's Supper.

5th Obj. IF Christ would have Infants to be Church-Members and baptized, it is strange he had not left us some Precept or President for it in the New Testament.

Ans^w. I think he hath, and that I have most clearly and fully proved it already. But then give me leave to ask you.

1st. WHAT Precept or President have you in all the New Testament for Womens receiving the Lord's Supper? Not one I am sure, and yet you can find out the Truth in this Case, without either.

2^{dly}. WHAT Precept or President have you in all the New Testament for swearing before a Magistrate? When our Saviour commands us not to swear at all, *Mat. v. 34*. And the Apostle *James Chap. v. 11*. commands us above all things not to swear at all.

3^{dly}. WHAT Precept or President have you in all the New Testament, for the Change of the Sabbath Day? When God commanded the Children of *Israel* to keep the Seventh Day throughout their Generations, for a perpetual Covenant, *Exod. xxxi. 16*.

4^{thly}. WHAT Precept or President have you in all the New Testament for a Christian Magistracy? Not one I am sure; and our Saviour commands his Disciples, *Mat. xx. 25*. Saying, *Ye know that the Princes of the Gentiles exercise Dominion over them, but it shall not be so among you.*

5^{thly}. WHAT Precept or President have you in the New Testament for going to Law? When it seems to be expressly forbidden, *Mat. v. 40*. and *1 Cor. vi. 1*.

NOW is not this a very strange thing, that you can

can easily get over the Difficulty in all these and many other Cases, and yet at the same time you will studiously endeavour to make this difficult which is very plain; you can find no Precept nor President in all the New Testament for Infants Church Membership and Baptism; and in all these and many other Cases you want none, but can easily find out the Truth without either; yea, believe and practice contrary to the express Letter of the Text; which looks as if you was very partial in your Faith, and will believe nothing but what you like.

6^{thly}. ANOTHER usual Objection against the Baptizing of Infants, is the Example of our Saviour, who was not Baptized till he was about Thirty Years of Age. *Luke. iii. 23.* But whether this Objection is raised designedly to serve a turn, or through Ignorance, I am wholly at a loss to determine. But let such know that this could not be otherwise; for none Baptized before *John*, and he did not, nor could not according to the Law, enter upon the Work of the Ministry till he was Thirty Years old, *Numb. iv. 3. 23. &c.* and *John* was but about Six Months older than our Saviour, *Luke. i. 36.* So that he could not be Baptized earlier because there was none to Baptize him. Neither did our Saviour himself enter upon the Work of the Ministry till he was Thirty Years old. *Luke iii. 21. 23.* But such Whims serves well enough to amuse and impose upon the Ignorant and unwary.

BUT it will be expected now, that I should also declare my Judgment concerning the Mode or Manner, how Baptism ought to be administered, according to its Primitive or first Institution.

AND of this I freely declare, that I am fully persuaded in my own Judgment and Conscience, That the Mode of Baptizing by Dipping or Plunging

ling the whole Body under Water, is a gross Error and Innovation, it having no Foundation in the Word of God.

The Grounds or Reasons for this my Perswasion are, That I cannot find throughout all the New Testament, any Precept or Command for it, nor any President or Example of any one that was baptized that Way.

NOW if our Brethren of the *Anabaptist* Perswasion could shew us where it was commanded, by whom it was instituted, or who ever baptized that Way, we should be inexcusable to dissent from them; but till then, it will be very unwarrantable for us to receive this, as well as any other human Invention in the Worship of God.

INDEED they all with one Consent and with the greatest Assurance tell us, that it was so instituted and so practised by such and such, and we may take their Word for it if we will, but one Word of God we have not for it in all the New Testament.

BUT the Texts of Scripture which they wrest to support their unsound Opinions, are chiefly these that follow.

Mat. iii. 16. *And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straitway out of the Water, &c.*

TO which I Answer, From hence it is evident, that he had been in the Water, and was baptized with it; but that it was done by dipping or plunging him into it, the Scripture doth not say.

AGAIN, *Acts viii. 38. And they went down both into the Water, both Philip and the Eunuch, and he baptized him. And vers. 39. And when they came up out of the Water, &c.* Now, say they, what could this going down of both into the Water be for, but in order to dip the Eunuch all under Water in baptizing him.

TO which I Answer, We do not read that Baptism was so administred to him, nor of any
Cir-

Circumstance relating thereunto, neither before nor afterward; such as stripping and putting on Change of Rayment, &c. But that the Spirit of the Lord immediately caught away *Philip*, and that the Eunuch went on his Way rejoicing.

BUT then there are two other Texts which seem more to their Purpose, as Mark i. 9. *And it came to pass in those Days, that Jesus came from Nazareth of Gallile, and was baptized of John in Jordan.* And Mat. iii. 5, 6. *Then went out to him, Jerusalem and all Judea, and all the Region round about Jordan, and was baptized of John in Jordan.*

I Answer, That they were baptized of John in Jordan is evident from these and other Texts of Scripture; but that they were baptized by dipping, or plunging the whole Body under Water, the Scripture doth no where say; and then we have no greater Authority yet for dipping than their bare Word.

BUT then there is also another Text, which they think to be yet still more to their Purpose, which is, John iii. 23. *And John also was baptizing in Enon, near Salem, because there was much Water there.*

NOW say they, Why should he make choice of a Place for baptizing where there was much Water, but for the better Convenience of dipping those whom he baptized.

I Answer, Here is not one Word of God for dipping, yet only our Friends will have it to be so at a venture.

BUT to Answer more directly and fully to the Purpose, The true State of the Case was certainly this (*viz.*) It was the custom in all these Countries to go with their Legs and Feet naked, only sometimes they wore Shoes or Sandals, but generally they wore neither, but went Bare-foot, and for that Reason it is that we so often Read

of washing their Feet, in both the Old and New Testament. So *Gen. xviii. 4.* *Abraham* said to the Angels, *Let a little Water I pray you be fetched to wash your Feet.* And so said *Lot* to the same Angels, *Gen. xix. 2.* And so did *Laban* to *Abraham's* Servants, he gave them Water to wash their Feet, *Gen. xxiv. 32.* And so did the Old Man to the *Levite* and his Concubine, *Judges xix. 21.*

Where observe, That the Women also went bare-foot as well as the Men; yea, so constant a Custom this was of washing their Feet, especially after a Journey, that the Apostle *Paul* reckons this very Work of washing the Saints Feet, one necessary Qualification of a Widow indeed, *1 Tim. v. 10.* *If she hath lodged Strangers, if she hath washed the Saints Feet.*

NOW the Case being so, that they all went bare-foot, both Men and Women; it was a very agreeable thing, and less trouble than any other way, for them to go a little way into a River to be baptized, yet without being dipped or plunged all under Water.

BUT against this they argue, Why then was it said, *That John was baptizing in Enon near Salem, because there was much Water there.* When (as some of them have in Scorn and Banter told me that) a Basin full of Water was enough to sprinkle many Hundreds? To such I answer,

1st. So would a Pond, like one of theirs, with the neighbourly Assistance of a little Gutter, serve to dip as many Thousands as commodiously as *Jordan* or *Enon*.

2^{dly}. IT required the Convenience of much Water for so great a Multitude of People in a Wilderness for many other Occasions besides Baptizing.

3^{dly}. IT was a very agreeable Convenience, even for Baptizing also. Considering,

1st. THE

1st. **THE** Place where they were, (*viz.*) In a Wilderness, *Mat.* iii. 1, 2. Where they had no other Conveniency for baptizing but the River.

2^{dly}. **THE** Manner how they went, (*viz.*) Bare-foot, both Men and Women, and therefore it was much more convenient for them to step a little way into the River to be baptized, than to do it any other Way.

THUS you see that here is no command of God to baptize by dipping the whole Body under Water, nor any President or Example of any one that was baptized that Way, notwithstanding it is so vehemently urged upon us to believe it.

AND therefore for them to infer from *John's* baptizing in *Enon*, because there was much Water there, or from Persons going down into the Water to be baptized, and coming up from the Water, after they had been baptized, that therefore they were dipped or plunged all under Water in their Baptism, is a Conceit which hath no Foundation in the Word of God.

FOR consider, that here was a very great Multitude of both Men and Women baptized, and that in a Wilderness, where they could have no Convenience for stripping and putting on dipping Garments, had they been provided with such, which would be ridiculously fond to imagine that they were; and certainly very many, if not all of them, were far from their own Home, and they must be baptized one of these two Ways, (*viz.*) either Gloathed or Naked. If they will say that they were all, both Men and Women, baptized Naked. Then I answer,

THAT the Pure and Holy God who, to guard against all Appearance of Immodesty, commanded his Priests, *Exod.* xx. 26. Not to go up by Steps unto his Altar, that their Nakedness might not be discovered thereon: Could never institute such a beastly

beastly Way of administering an Ordinance, as is justly to be abhorred by all modest Women and Men too.

BUT if they will say, that they were baptized Cloathed, and that by Immersion or Dipping the Body all under Water; then I must tell them that we have no Reason to believe them; for I appeal to their own Consciences, whether any one of them who make so much Disturbance about it, durst presume to go and be dipped (suppose) in the River *Thames*, and then travel ten or twenty Miles in that Condition, as very many of them Both Men and Women must needs do, who were baptized by *John* in the Wilderness. *Mat. iii. 5, 6.*

BUT if they will say, Yes, they would; then again I must tell them, that their own constant Practice doth confute them; for they cannot give us one single Instance of any Man, and much less of any Woman, who when baptized by them, went Home in that Condition, though they had not one Quarter of a Mile to go. No, far from that; for they are first stript and drest in a dipping Garment, and then after they are dipped, they are again stripped, dried and drest with the utmost Diligence and Dispatch, and all this before the warming comfortable Influences of a good Fire; all which are such Conveniencies as doth not grow in any Wilderness in the World.

BUT then by all this it is very evident, that they are conscious to themselves that such mad doings would be abominably odious and ridiculous to others, and very hazardous if not destructive to the Person thus baptized; else why have they themselves left Rivers and Wildernesses, for warmer Places and better Conveniencies? And then, why would they impose on us to believe that which they themselves durst not presume, no not so much as once to put in Practice?

BUT

BUT then there are two other Texts of Scripture which I must not omit, because they lay such a great Stress upon them, as first, *Rom. vi. 3, 4. Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized into his Death; therefore we are buried with him by Baptism into Death.* The other Text is, *Col. ii. 12. Buried with him in Baptism, wherein also you are risen with him through the Faith of the Operation of God.*

NOW, say they, what can be plainer, Persons are to be Buried under the Water in Baptism, as *Christ* was buried in the Grave; and they must be covered all over, else they are not buried; Baptism is to be so administred, as to represent the Burial and Resurrection of *Christ*, for so saith the Text, *Buried with him by Baptism.*

TO all which I answer. That the whole of your plausible arguing from both these Texts, is unsound and utterly false.

FOR 1st. Did *Christ* institute Baptism to represent his Suffering, either in the whole or in part? No, certainly the Lord's Supper, and that only was appointed to that End; as you may see, *Luke 22. 19. This is my Body which is given for you; this do in Remembrance of me:* And *1 Cor. ii. 26. For as often as you eat this Bread and drink this Cup, ye do shew the Lord's Death till he come.*

BUT where hath he said, Be you dipped or plunged, or buried either under Water in Baptism in remembrance of me, or to represent my Burial and Resurrection? And then how durst you presume to appoint wrong Ends for any of *Christ's* Ordinances which he never appointed, and wrest the Scripture to support an Error? Again,

2^{dly}. **IT** was not Baptism with Water which was here meant, but the Baptism of *Christ's* Sufferings, which was also called his Baptism; as you may see, *Mat. xx. 22. Where our Saviour speaking*
to

to his Disciples, saith, *Can you drink of the Cup which I shall drink of, or be baptized with the Baptism that I am baptized with.*

AND it was this great Baptism of his Sufferings, that he was so much concerned about *Luke xii. 50. But I have a Baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straited till it be accomplished.* And it was this Baptism of his Sufferings that Believers are here said to be buried with *Christ* into, as is evident from the very words of the Text, *Therefore we are buried with him by Baptism into Death.* That is into *Christ's* Death. It was a Baptism into Death that Believers are here said to be buried with *Christ* into. This Text has nothing to do with your Water Baptism.

AND for the other Text *Col. ii. 12. Buried with him in Baptism, wherein also you are risen with him through the Faith of the Operation of God.*

BURIED with him in Baptism, That is, buried with *Christ* in the Baptism of his Sufferings, which by Faith was made theirs, and not in your Water Baptism; as is also evident from the following Words, *Wherein also you are risen with him through the Faith of the Operation of God.*

THUS you see that as Believers are here said to be buried with *Christ*; so they are also said to be risen with him; and both through the Faith of the Operation of God.

BUT you rise up out of the Water in your Baptism by Works, and that of the Operation of the Man that lifts you up.

AND thus Believers are not only said to be Buried with *Christ*; but according to this same Language of the Gospel, they are also said to be Circumcised with him, *Col. ii. 11.* And to be Crucified with him *Gal. ii. 20.* And to be Dead with him, *Rom. vi. 8.* As well as to be Buried with him in *Rom. vi. 4.* and *Col. ii. 12.*

And

And Believers are also said to be Risen with him in *Col. iii. 1.* Yea, and in this same Language of the Gospel, they are said to be Quickened together with *Christ*, and raised up together, and made to sit together in heavenly Places in *Christ Jesus. Ephes. ii. 3, 6.*

FROM all which it is very evident, that Believers were considered as being together with *Christ* in all his Sufferings as their common Head and Representative; for all that he did and suffered was not only for their sakes, but also in their Room and Stead; and therefore as they were with him in all his Sufferings, so they shall be eternally with him in his Glory; who hath quickened us together with *Christ*, and raised us up together and made us to sit together in heavenly Places in *Christ Jesus*.

THUS I trust I have made good my Assertion (*viz.*) That the Mode of Baptizing by Dipping or Plunging the whole Body under Water, is a gross Error and Innovation, it having no Foundation in the Word of God.

AND now I solemnly declare in the Presence and Fear of Almighty God, who knoweth our Hearts, that I have done nothing through Strife or vain glorying; but in meekness and lowliness of Mind, esteeming many of those whom I have opposed better than my self, *Philip ii. 3.* And had not the deciding of this Controversie been of much greater Importance than is generally apprehended by most, I should have been far from engaging in this most disagreeable Task; but all those who deny Infants Baptism, deny also their Church-Membership, and make no difference betwixt the Infants of Believers and the Infants of Heathens or Mahomitans, and also exclude from Church-Fellowship, or Communion with them at the Lords Table, all those though never so holy

Christians, who differ from them in mode of Baptizing, and thus under pretence of strictly adhering to the Rule of the Gospel, they call Men off from an able, godly, orthodox Ministry, and separate the People from their lawful and faithful Pastors, which is a thing greatly to be lamented, that so many who we hope are Persons truly fearing God, should be so far imposed upon and misled, as to believe that all the able faithful Ministers of the Gospel in the World are worthy to be deserted and separated from, (as is their usual Custom) for no other Cause, but only for that they dare not in Conscience part with the Truth and Ordinance of God, and conform themselves to their mistaken Opinions and Practice. From which, and all other Errors and Mistakes, the Lord of his Infinite Mercy, deliver both us and them.

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